Hands On®
The Newsletter of the American Massage Therapy Association
March/April 2003

Cosmetology Group Seeks National Recognition Of Massage Programs

The National Accrediting Commission of Cosmetology Arts and Sciences (NACCAS) has requested recognition by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) to expand its scope beyond accrediting programs of cosmetology arts and sciences, to accredit massage schools and programs.

In December 2002, the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) recommended approval to Rod Paige, the U.S. Secretary of Education, who makes the final decision on recognition. However, NACCAS is required "to modify its curriculum standard to define the essential elements that define the curriculum of a program of massage therapy" and report back on this by December 2003.

A Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) representative spoke against its approval at the December meeting, and 136 letters opposing it were received by NACIQI.

The main issue for NACCAS is to seek Title IV financial aid for students who go through

continued on page 7

Bonus Insert

AMTA 2003 Continuing Education

This issue of ***Hands On*** features the *AMTA 2003 Learning Pages* insert. Turn to the insert for the most complete details about AMTA continuing education events for 2003, including the National Learning Center; the 2003 Mind, Body, Spirit Retreat; and the AMTA 2003 National Convention. Discover more about these events, and then call AMTA to register today.

Bettering Schools, Breaking Records At COS Conference

Record-low weather in Florida didn't stop the record-high 142 people from attending the AMTA Council of Schools (COS) Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting in Clearwater Beach, held in late January.

Those attendees represented 75 AMTA School members at the conference—up more than 44 percent from the 52 School members in 2002. At the time of printing, AMTA has 348 School members.

"This year's conference surpassed our expectations," says COS President Peggy Smith (KS). "We're very pleased that our numbers are growing—and will continue to grow in the near future."

In the exhibit hall, 25 vendors displayed massage therapy education and practice-related products and services. This is a 25 percent increase from the 20 exhibitors in 2002, and an amazing 178 percent increase from the nine exhibitors in 2001!

During the meeting, several awards were given out. Lucy Liben of the Swedish Institute, Inc. (New York) received the COS Meritorious Service Award. It was announced that Tracy Walton of the Muscular Therapy Institute (Cambridge, Massachusetts) will receive the Jerome Perlinski Teacher of the Year Award at the 2003 Teachers Conference in Baltimore, Maryland (July 31–August 3).

Other highlights of the meeting included the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) Accreditation Workshop, which was held prior to the start of the COS conference. Nina McIntosh gave a thought-provoking keynote presentation, entitled *The Importance of Teaching Professional Relationship Skills*. Representatives from the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, COMTA, the AMTA Foundation and AMTA presented annual addresses to attendees.

AMTA School members enjoy networking with colleagues at the annual meeting.

> "This year's conference surpassed our expectations. We're very pleased that our numbers are growing—and will continue to grow in the near future."
>
> *– COS President Peggy Smith*

Each year, the COS conference and annual meeting provides valuable educational and networking opportunities for both AMTA school owners and administrators.

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Membership in AMTA is open to all qualified individuals regardless of race, creed, national origin, gender, age, marital status, religion, sexual orientation or physical handicap.

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President's Letter

AMTA Convention 2003

The AMTA 2003 National Convention will be held on October 22–26 in my hometown of Richmond, Virginia. Are you ready? Are you setting goals that will allow you to attend and *participate*?

I believe this is the first time that the convention has been held in the hometown of the president, and I am honored and so excited about what this convention will have to offer. October seems far away, but it will be here much sooner than any of us anticipate.

The AMTA Convention Planning Committee has been hard at work for almost a year already, creating our theme and putting together an impressive lineup of educators. This year is the 60th anniversary for AMTA! To reflect this milestone, "Diamond Jubilee" has been chosen as the theme.

It is my pleasure and honor to serve as the 26th AMTA president. On the occasion of our 60th anniversary, I want to thank all those volunteers who gave of their time, talents and passion to serve in the president position. Without their commitment to AMTA, our members and the massage profession would not be where we are today.

Previous Presidents of AMTA

Charles T. Williams	1943-1944	Thomas R. Fink	1976-1978
Ira Lewis	1944-1945	Darold Hartsook	1978-1982
Clark Cottrell	1945-1952	Pierrette Plouffe	1982-1986
Earl Alexander	1952-1954	Robert K. King	1986-1990
Ruth E. Williams	1954-1955	Elliot D. Greene	1990-1994
D.S. Carlson	1955-1958	Virginia H. Anthony-Barrow	1994-1996
Thomas D. Olson	1958-1959	Scott P. Lamp	1996-1997
George D. Gammon	1959-1962	E. Houston LeBrun	1997-1998
Samuel G. Dahlgren	1962-1965	Adela T. Basayne	1998-1999
Thomas R. Fink	1965-1968	Maureen A. Moon	1999-2000
Paul Sittler	1968-1971	Steven C. Olson	2000-2001
Frank Persitza	1971-1974	Carolyn Talley Porter	2001-2002
Anne Bergholz	1974-1976	Brenda L. Griffith	2002-2003

Start planning now to attend, participate and celebrate AMTA's 60th anniversary! I look forward to welcoming all of you to Richmond.

In service and celebration,

Brenda L. Griffith

Brenda L. Griffith
AMTA President

Insurance Reimbursement Codes Being Evaluated

AMTA Explores CPT Codes at AMA Meeting

In the future, more and more massage therapists in the health-care industry will likely use Current Procedural Terminology® (CPT) codes or other accepted codes for insurance purposes.

To provide its input on this issue, AMTA attended the American Medical Association (AMA) Alternative Therapy Services Workgroup, held last October. The meeting provided an opportunity for dialog with national organizations representing providers of alternative therapies and non-physician health-care professionals about the development of CPT codes, or code change proposals, so that organizations can better understand the CPT process and successfully add appropriate codes to represent alternative therapy procedures.

"The AMA was very welcoming of the organizations, encouraged the organizations to apply for CPT codes to represent alternative therapies and offered to support the organizations in the code development process," says Patricia M. Donohue (NY), chair of the AMTA Healthcare Integration Committee (HIC), who represented AMTA at the meeting.

The workgroup attendees suggested that the existing codes for many alternative therapies don't reflect the complexity, intensity or training necessary to perform a service, nor do the codes take into account the evaluation and management of the service.

The group also discussed the pros and cons of how specific a CAM code should represent a treatment or modality. The AMA feels it is best to have as few codes as are necessary to accurately represent a procedure.

The workgroup spent time with each organization to help define the next steps for creating new or revised CPT codes. The CPT panel is looking for codes that are widely agreed upon by a profession, rather than codes that are only agreed upon by a fraction of a profession.

For questions or comments about the workgroup meeting and CPT codes, contact Donohue via E-mail at: *pdjf@aol.com*.

CPT and Alternative Code Issues Evolving

Since the meeting last October, issues related to codes have been evolving rapidly. Alternative Link, a company that has developed an alternative set of codes—called ABC codes—for complementary and alternative therapies has had discussions with the AMA and with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) about using their ABC codes for health-care transactions.

In late January 2003, the Integrative Healthcare Policy Consortium, of which AMTA is a member, submitted a support statement to HHS for a process that would achieve an integrated set of codes that represents all health-care transactions. HHS then made a decision on January 30 to authorize a test of a proposed modification to the coding standards. The authorization creates an exception to the current Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) regulations, and will compare the quality and cost-effectiveness of using several different codes.

The issue of codes for insurance reimbursement is evolving rapidly for alternative and complementary therapies, including massage therapy. As decisions are made, AMTA will keep members informed of those choices that could affect members who seek insurance reimbursement.

CPT Codes, HIPAA and JCAHO Reports Presented at HIC Hearing

A group of 24 participants at the 2002 Portland Convention's "Healthcare Integration Committee Hearing" came to a consensus: As massage therapists, we may think we don't deal with insurance, but peripherally, we do.

The purpose of the hearing was to listen to the concerns, involvement, expectations and suggestions from individuals focused on insurance and health-integration issues, and on how this input may impact the massage therapist and the massage profession.

At the hearing, Ed Denning (OH), Deanna Jackson (CT) and Jane Greene (NY), all Healthcare Integration Committee (HIC) workgroup leaders, made informative presentations to the group.

Denning, the workgroup leader charged with investigating and making recommendations regarding the development of procedural codes for massage therapy delivered by massage therapists, briefly explained how ABC codes might be utilized, the need for ongoing code development for massage therapists and the likelihood that the codes will be approved by the government for usage.

Jackson, chair of the workgroup charged with developing appropriate messages for AMTA's target audiences, and serving as a resource for information about insurance reimbursement for complementary and alternative medicine, reported on the one-day training session she attended about HIPAA. She stressed that the main point to remember about HIPAA at this time is: *If you plan to submit claims for health insurance reimbursement electronically, you must comply with this act.*

continued on page 6

For More Information

Be sure to explore the following informative Web sites that the Healthcare Integration Committee has gathered for AMTA members:

- wwww.hhs.gov
  United States Department of Health & Human Services
- www.institute.md
  The Medical Management Institute home page
- www.instituteservices.com
  Another Medical Management Institute site
- www.complianceinfo.com
  HCPro—The Healthcare Corporate Compliance Supersite™
- www.irp.com
  Information Resource Products—Coding Solutions for the Health Care Industry
- www.cms.gov
  Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Legislative Report

31 Strong And Growing: Illinois Passes Massage Regulation

Massage legislation was passed in Illinois on December 4, 2002, making it the 31st state to regulate the profession.

Illinois' Massage Licensing Act became effective January 1, 2002. Massage therapists in Illinois have, however, until January 1, 2004, to comply with the act. After this time, the state is completely taking over the regulation and licensing of massage therapy.

AMTA recognizes that state government regulation of the practice of massage therapy is a desirable means of meeting the needs of the public and the profession. "This law is a valuable change from restrictive, duplicative local regulations, to a more consistent, state-level standard," says Allison Ishman, AMTA-Illinois Chapter 2nd vice president and Government Relations Committee (GRC) subcommittee chair.

Other members who played an important role in supporting the bill were Jerry Blackburn, GRC chair; Sue Gibson, Illinois Chapter immediate past president; Jane Neumann, Illinois Chapter 3rd vice president; and lobbyist Maureen Mulhall. "This is the best thing I've done professionally in 21 years," says Mulhall.

What happens next is the establishment of a seven-member board, appointed by the director of the Department of Professional Regulation, to oversee matters of massage licensing and discipline. Six of the board members will be massage therapists and one will be a public member. Of the massage therapists, two will represent schools—one from a private school and the other from a public school.

continued on page 7

(left to right) Maureen Mulhall, Jane Neumann, Allison Ishman and Sue Gibson gather before their early June 2002 legislative meeting.

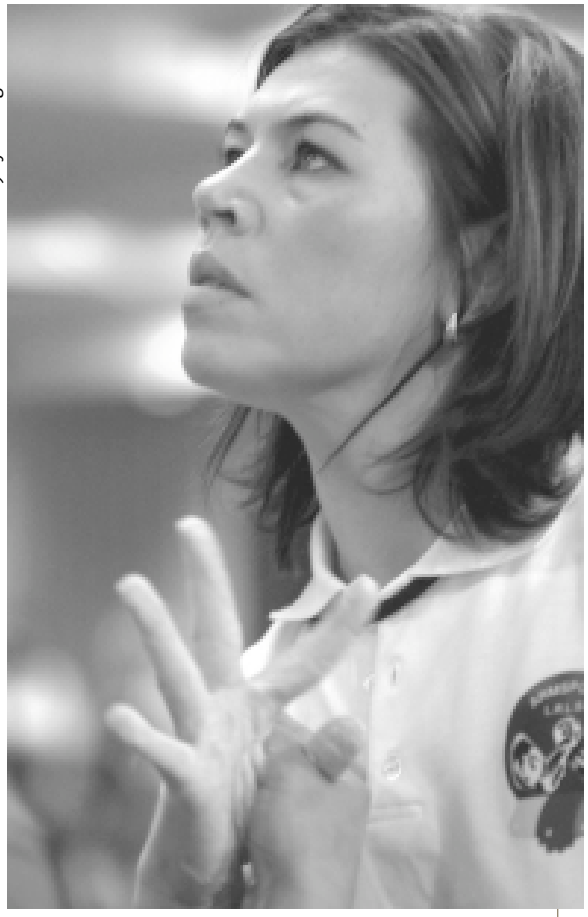
Photo by Marita Blanken

fingerprints

Strong Arms Provide Deep Touch

An abundance of arm and hand strength is necessary to perform massages; and, Dalia Medziausyte (IL) proves that having the world's strongest arms can be put to good use.

Photo courtesy of Chicago Tribune



When not winning arm-wrestling championships, Dalia Medziausyte is a massage therapist.

Last November, Medziausyte received gold medals for her native Lithuania at the 23rd Annual World Armwrestling Federation World Championship, winning for both her left arm and her right arm in her division.

When she is not arm wrestling, Medziausyte is a massage therapist at the Zazú Salon and Day Spa in Hinsdale, Illinois. She also does massage part time at a sports clinic in Chicago. "I have been doing massage for 12 years [longer than she has been involved in arm wrestling]," she says. "My hands are strong for massage, and that helps me in my arm wrestling."

Besides Medziausyte's recent titles, the Chicago resident also has won three European championships and 14 world championships.

Member Assumes Director Role At Elder-Care Organization

Ann Catlin (MO) has become the new director of Compassionate Touch™, a group that seeks to serve senior clients with dementia or those approaching death with touch. Catlin became certified as a massage therapist in 1999, and brings to the position 22 years of experience in occupational therapy. She is a

former instructor of geriatric massage at the School of Massage Arts in Springfield, Missouri.

Catlin enjoys teaching, and is dedicated to her position at Compassionate Touch, which was the brainchild of Dawn Nelson in 1991. "I am committed to teaching massage therapists and caregivers in this modality, and to promoting the return of a 'human touch' to caregiving," she says.

Ann Catlin takes pleasure in spreading human touch to the elderly.

Those massage therapists interested in contacting Catlin about the growing field of providing touch to those in later life stages can do so at: www.compassionate-touch.org.

Event Increases Publicity Of Massage, Raises Money For Charity

For the third year in a row, Kay Wise-Denty (TX) has organized a successful massage event that offers half-price 10-minute chair massages to participants at the Rockport (Texas) Seafair. The event, which was held for two days in mid-October 2002, was worked by eight volunteer massage therapists who provided a total of 140 10-minute massages. "We are pleased that we surpassed last year's [2001] total to donate $700 to the United Way of Aransas County," says Wise-Denty.

Larry Mandel gives a massage to a Rockport Seafair attendee.

The event promoted massage for stress, which was AMTA's 2002 National Massage Therapy Awareness Week® theme. Besides Wise-Denty, massages were given by Ramona Preston, Eunice Maldonado, Regina Whitstine, Pam Poncik, Cornelius Lowe, Pam Williams and Larry Mandel.

quick tips!

Spring Clean Your Space

One of feng shui's principle tenets is that clutter detracts from harmony. In *Clear Your Clutter with Feng Shui*, author Karen Kingston says there are four categories of clutter:

1. *Things that you do not use or love.* Things that are loved or used and appreciated have strong vibrant and joyous energy around them. Things that are neglected, forgotten, unwanted, unloved or unused will cause the energy to slow and stagnate.

2. *Things that are untidy.* When things have a place and they are put there repeatedly, you know in your mind's eye their precise location. Lives work better when you know where things are.
3. *Too much stuff in too little space.* This is common when a business grows but the office doesn't. After filling up all its spaces, your office begins to feel as if it cannot breathe. Cabinets are full and passageways are narrow. Doors cannot open. It's time to find new space or shift some of the stuff out.
4. *Unfinished business.* Things left unfinished clutter the psyche. Things not dealt with reflect *issues* not dealt with and drain your energy.

Adapted from The Business of Massage *textbook.*
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Link Up To The Newly Improved Chapter Center

WEB BYTES

Have you logged on to AMTA's Web site with your member ID number and last name yet? AMTA is receiving positive comments about the new member portals that have been added to the Web site.

For added benefits, AMTA has been upgrading the "Chapter Center," at: www.amtamassage.org/member/chapcen.html. Many new items are available in the "Chapter Center," including new forms and PDF files that are easy for any chapter officer to download. (If you find a PDF form or template on the Web site that you would like to use, follow the instructions below to create the form.) There are now more than 30 forms and templates, in addition to six Chapter Tool Kits. AMTA makes it effortless for you to conduct chapter business with these materials.

In the revised "Chapter Center," all AMTA members can benefit from information about chapter events, chapter fees, new chapter initiatives, AMTA's Massage Emergency Response Team™ and links to other AMTA publications.

How To Use The "Chapter Center" PDF Forms

1. Open the PDF file that you want to use.
2. Save this PDF file to your desktop by clicking on the disk icon.
3. Open the PDF file once you are offline, and print a hard copy for yourself.
4. Use the EDIT button to scroll down to "select all" text. Then scroll down to "copy" the text.
5. Paste this text into Microsoft Word or a similar program, and use the hard copy to create your form. You will have all the text that will make it easy for you to work with. It will not look the same. However, you can use the printed copy as a guide to reformat and create your own form.
6. Want to add an AMTA logo? Just select the black-and-white logo to download from the Web site, and add to your file. Paste this at the top of the form.

NOTE:

If you are having problems with the above instructions, please refer to the "Support" section of www.adobe.com (developers of Adobe Acrobat Reader and PDF software).

Federation Web Site Boasts New Look

Not sure what the Federation of Therapeutic Massage, Bodywork and Somatic Practice Organizations, of which AMTA was a founding member, is all about? Then take a look at the federation's newly revised Web site at: www.federationmbs.org. Here you will find the federation's mission and shared vision, programs and projects, and a Joint

Government Relations Committee legislative packet. Also included on the site is contact information for the eight federation member organizations.

REMINDER:

To those AMTA members who indicate they also practice Feldenkrais®, Rolfing® and/or Trager®, you should soon be receiving via mail a letter notifying you that the right to represent yourself as one of those practitioners must be granted by the individual organizations. See the January/February 2003 issue of *Hands On* for more information.

CPT Codes

continued from page 3

Greene discussed the role of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), and how its work might affect massage therapists.

GET INVOLVED!

The hearing gave members a forum for voicing their thoughts about health-care integration to the committee. The HIC meeting was one of five presentations and hearings presented at the AMTA 2002 National Convention. Look for more opportunities to let your voice be heard at the 2003 convention presentations and hearings in Richmond, Virginia (October 22-26).

Have A Question About AMTA's Insurance Plans?

AMTA understands your needs to be protected as a massage therapist, and offers you several useful insurance plans from Marsh Affinity Group Services, a service of Seabury & Smith.

Besides providing the best Professional and General Liability Insurance coverage, which you receive as a member, AMTA also offers nine optional insurance plans through Marsh Affinity, which can be found at: www.amtamassage.org/member/options.html.

Additional plan descriptions, downloadable documents and online applications can be found at: www.seaburychicago.com. Comments, concerns and requests for more information should be made to:

Marsh Affinity Group Services,
a service of Seabury & Smith
1440 Renaissance Drive
Park Ridge, IL 60068-1400
800-503-9230
(Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central time)
Fax: 847-803-1653
E-mail: *custsvc2@seaburychicago.com*

Legislative

continued from page 4

"I think it's a great step for massage therapists and the consumers of massage," says Rep. Beth Coulson, R-Ill., one of the House sponsors of the Massage Licensing Act. Coulson is also a licensed physical therapist and an associate professor at Finch University of Health Sciences/The Chicago Medical School.

For an easy-to-understand breakdown of the regulation, go to the AMTA-IL Web site at: www.amta-il.org/html/coalition.html.

Subscribe Now

AMTA's *e-touch*℠ newsletter

Have you not yet subscribed to AMTA's monthly online newsletter? Then sign up today for *e-touch* , and in no time you will be sent via E-mail the latest information, business ideas and tips in the massage therapy profession. Sign up on AMTA's home page, at: www.amtamassage.org. Scroll halfway down the page, and look on the right-hand side for the link "Sign Up NOW! FREE e-touch newsletter."

foundation bulletin

At Peace Media Joins Foundation As Silver Partner

The AMTA Foundation is pleased to announce that At Peace® Media, a vendor of music, videos and natural body care products for health, has joined the foundation's Corporate Giving Program as a Silver Partner with a gift of $2,000. At Peace Media will donate a portion of the proceeds of the sale of the three *Spirit* collection CDs to the foundation.

The CDs are available at a special price until April 30 at: www.atpeacemedia.com/pages/musicSPIRITindex.html.

Questions can be directed to Gini Ohlson, director of the AMTA Foundation, at 847-869-5019, ext. 120, or contact her via E-mail at: *gohlson@amtafoundation.org*.

Foundation President Joins Canadian Advisory Board

President John Balletto (RI) has been invited to become a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the International Symposium on the Science of Touch, which will be held in Montreal, Canada, from May 12-15, 2004. For further information about the Canadian Touch Research Center-sponsored symposium, go to: www.ccrt-ctrc.org.

Special Thanks To CSMT

The AMTA Foundation would like to thank the Chicago School of Massage Therapy (CSMT) and owner Robert King for the annual retail raffle the school holds every year during AMTA's National Massage Therapy Awareness Week®. All proceeds from the raffle are donated to the AMTA Foundation. The foundation would like to acknowledge the extra work CSMT and King do to benefit its mission.

Cosmetology

continued from page 1

its massage programs. NACCAS has been accrediting some massage programs on its own for 10 years. COMTA also accredited massage programs before USDE recognized it as an approved accrediting body.

An ad hoc committee of NACCAS has been formed to make curriculum standards recommendations. They have asked AMTA President Brenda L. Griffith (VA) to be a member of the committee. However, AMTA believes that NACCAS does not have the expertise in massage therapy to accredit massage programs, so Griffith has declined the invitation. AMTA feels that educational standards for massage programs should come from those who represent the profession and reflect the community of interest—massage therapists, educators, school administrators, regulators and employers in the profession.

AMTA believes that COMTA has clearly demonstrated the knowledge to accredit massage programs, and best represents the interests of the massage profession. COMTA was recognized by the USDE in July 2002.

The USDE has made it clear that organizations already approved to accredit educational programs can expand their scope, even if a significant part of a profession believes that the organization isn't qualified to determine educational standards for that profession.

Calendar

2003

March 27-30
AMTA New England Regional Conference
Boxborough, Massachusetts
Contact: 401-233-8108

April 11-13
AMTA National Learning Center
Atlanta, Georgia
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143

May 8-10
AMTA Mid-Atlantic Conference
Ocean City, Maryland
Contact: 410-298-0704
amtamd@email.msn.com

May 17
AMTA Board of Directors Meeting
Teton Village, Wyoming

May 17-20
AMTA 2003 Specialty Retreat
Teton Village, Wyoming
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143

June 20-22
AMTA National Learning Center
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143

Education Events

National Learning Center Travels To Atlanta, Oklahoma City

The AMTA National Learning Center (NLC) is designed to provide high-quality, low-cost education to areas that have limited access to valuable educational opportunities. The following courses will be offered in Atlanta (April 11-13) and Oklahoma City (June 20-22).

"Energy Work for Trauma" with John Calvi (4 CEUs): Calvi is a certified massage therapist specializing in massage for trauma. He has 20 years of experience working with women survivors of sexual assault, people with AIDS, tortured refugees, inmates and hospice-care patients.

"CranioSacral℠ Therapy & Its Application to Massage Therapy" with Roy Desjarlais (4 CEUs): Desjarlais ran a successful practice focusing on CranioSacral Therapy before joining the Upledger Institute in 1994 as an instructor (has since taught more than 75 classes) and staff clinician.

"Passive Stretches from East & West" with Kay Rynerson (12 CEUs): Rynerson graduated from the Seattle Massage School in 1988, and began her studies in Thai massage in 1993 with Michael Eisenberg. She continued her studies at the Institute of Thai Massage in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and received certification to teach traditional massage of Thailand.

"Spa & Structural Reflexology" with Karen Zaharatos (12 CEUs): Zaharatos has studied with the most acclaimed reflexologists in the world to ensure a versatile standard. She is well versed in anatomy and physiology for a great perspective of the macrocosm of the human body on the microcosm of the foot.

Mind, Body, Spirit Retreat Quickly Approaching

Have you made plans yet to attend the AMTA 2003 Mind, Body, Spirit Retreat in Teton Village, Wyoming, from May 17-20? If not, don't delay! This retreat, set against the beautiful Teton Mountains, is being held at the Snake River Lodge & Spa [www.snakeriverlodge.com], a RockResorts, L.L.C.-owned luxury resort hotel. The following courses will be offered: "Getting Movement Into Your Massage" with Marian Wolfe Dixon (4 CEUs); "YogaRhythmics and Chakras" with Connie Miller (4 CEUs); and "Body/Mind Exercises to Release Face, Jaw, Neck & Shoulder Tension" with Judith Prager (4 CEUs).

Snake River Lodge & Spa

Contact:

For more information about either of these exciting events, see the *AMTA 2003 Learning Pages* insert in this issue, or call the AMTA National Office at 847-864-0123, ext. 143.

Upcoming Deadlines

May 1, 2003 — ***July/August 2003 Issue***
July 1, 2003 — ***Sept./Oct. 2003 Issue***

Hands On welcomes contributions from all AMTA members. All submissions must include a legible signature and phone number, and may be edited for space and clarification. ***Hands On*** does not accept advertisements. Address all correspondence to:

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